R E P O R T R E S U M E S

ED 013 106 JC 670 820

PERFORMANCES OF AVERAGE STUDENTS IN A JUNIOR COLLEGE AND IN FOUR-YEAR INSTITUTIONS.

BY- HALL, LINCOLN H.
CALIFORNIA STATE DEPT. OF EDUCATION, SACRAMENTO

REPORT NUMBER CSDE-RB-16 PUB DATE JAN 67
EDRS PRICE MF-$0.25 HC-$0.44 11P.

DESCRIPTORS- *JUNIOR COLLEGES, *AVERAGE STUDENTS, *TRANSFER STUDENTS, *TERMINAL STUDENTS, PREDICTIVE ABILITY (TESTING), ACADEMIC ABILITY, ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE, GRADE POINT AVERAGE, GRADUATION, CALIFORNIA TEST OF MENTAL MATURITY,

THE STUDY WAS DESIGNED TO DETERMINE THE DEGREE OF ACADEMIC SUCCESS OF STUDENTS OF AVERAGE ABILITY WHO ENROLLED AS FRESHMEN IN A CALIFORNIA JUNIOR COLLEGE DURING AN 11-YEAR PERIOD. THE SUBJECTS WERE THOSE WHO (1) SCORED IN THE MIDDLE 20 PERCENT OF NATIONAL JUNIOR COLLEGE NORMS ON A COLLEGE APTITUDE TEST AND (2) EARNED IQ SCORES FROM 90 TO 110 ON THE CALIFORNIA TEST OF MENTAL MATURITY. DATA COMPILED FROM THE RECORDS AT THE JUNIOR COLLEGE AND AT TRANSFER INSTITUTIONS SHOWED THAT (1) STUDENTS OF AVERAGE ABILITY NUMBERED APPROXIMATELY 17 PERCENT OF THE TOTAL GROUP OF ENTERING FRESHMEN, (2) FEWER THAN ONE-THIRD OF THESE STUDENTS RECEIVED THE AA DEGREE OR TRANSFERRED TO A 4-YEAR INSTITUTION, (3) OVER ONE-HALF OF THOSE WHO TRANSFERRED TO THE UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA OR A STATE COLLEGE EARNED A BACHELOR'S DEGREE, (4) THERE WAS CONSIDERABLE VARIATION IN GRADE POINT AVERAGES AFTER TRANSFER, WITH 75 PERCENT OF THE STUDENTS EARNING RECORDS BETWEEN 2.0 AND 2.9, AND (5) IN GENERAL, STUDENTS WHO EARNED BACHELOR'S DEGREES REQUIRED MORE THAN FOUR SEMESTERS AFTER TRANSFER IN ORDER TO COMPLETE THE REQUIREMENTS. THE AUTHORS CONCLUDED THAT (1) BY CAUSING A RAISING OF GRADING STANDARDS, ENROLLMENT PRESSURES HAVE CONTRIBUTED TO THE DECREASING PERCENTAGE OF AA DEGREES AMONG THESE STUDENTS, (2) TERMINAL STUDENTS MAY PLACE GREATER EMPHASIS ON OCCUPATIONAL SKILLS THAN ON EARNING A DEGREE, AND (3) PERSEVERANCE IS A FACTOR WHICH CONTRIBUTES GREATLY TO THE AVERAGE STUDENT'S CHANCES FOR SUCCESS AFTER TRANSFER. (WO)

ERIC

ED013106

RESEARCH BRIEF

No. 16 January 1967

BUREAU OF PUPIL PERSONNEL SERVICES

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, EDUCATION & WELFARE
OFFICE OF EDUCATION

THIS DOCUMENT HAS BEEN REPRODUCED EXACTLY AS RECEIVED FROM THE PERSON OR ORGANIZATION ORIGINATING IT. POINTS OF VIEW OR OPINIONS STATED DO NOT NECESSARILY REPRESENT OFFICIAL OFFICE OF EDUCATION POSITION OR POLICY.

UNIVERSITY OF CALIF.
LOS ANGELES

SEP 7 1967

CLEARINGHOUSE FOR
JUNIOR COLLEGE
INFORMATION

PERFORMANCES OF AVERAGE STUDENTS IN A JUNIOR COLLEGE AND IN FOUR-YEAR INSTITUTIONS

CALIFORNIA STATE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

MAX RAFFERTY SUPERINTENDENT OF PUBLIC INSTRUCTION

SACRAMENTO

JC 670 820

ACADEMIC PERFORMANCES OF STUDENTS OF AVERAGE ABILITY IN A JUNIOR COLLEGE, THE STATE COLLEGES, AND THE UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA

Lincoln H. Hall
Dean of Student Personnel
College of the Sequoias, Visalia

Problem

The increasingly higher standards of admission set by the University of California and the state colleges pose a problem for many students in the secondary schools. High school and junior college counselors, working with students in a highly nonselective environment, are led to ask, "Can the student of average academic aptitude aspire to a bachelor's degree in California's publicly supported institutions of higher learning?" The present study examined the academic performances in junior college and in four-year state institutions of "average" transfer and terminal students, who entered the College of the Sequoias during an eleven-year period from 1953-54 through 1963-64.

Procedure

For purposes of this study, "average" students were defined as those day students whose percentile rankings on a college aptitude test were between 40 and 60 (using national junior college norms) and whose IQ's were between 90 and 110 (using the CTMM). Their transcripts at the College of the Sequoias were examined to determine their academic performance in junior college. Forms were sent to the state colleges and the branches of the University of California requesting information on the academic performance of those who transferred to those institutions. All 15 state colleges and the five branches of the University of California to which the students had transferred returned the information forms within six months. Data on all 435 transferring students were received, including grade point averages for 343 or 79 percent of the group.

Findings

1. Students Classified as Average. Table 1 shows the number and percentage of students who were classified as average in each of the 11 years for which data were gathered. The number of average students did not grow in proportion to the increased enrollment during the years studied. Of the more than 10,000 entering freshmen enrolled in daytime classes from September, 1953, through January, 1964, 1,770 or about 17 percent were classified as average.

2. Number of Students Who Earned Associate in Arts Degrees. In Table 2 are shown the numbers and percentages of average students who succeeded in meeting associate in arts degree requirements or in transferring to four-year institutions. Because the data suggested a decline during the 11-year period in the proportion of average students who completed requirements for the associate in arts degree or for transfer to a four-year

institution, a further analysis was made to verify the trend. The students were divided into two groups, those who entered the College of the Sequoias during the period of 1953-54 through 1957-58, and those who entered during the period of 1958-59 through 1962-63, and their records were compared. (Data for 1963-64 were excluded because a large proportion of students take more than four semesters to complete associate in arts degree requirements.) A comparison of the records made by the two groups verified the trend, as shown in Table 3.

3. Performances of Transfer Students. The performances of the students who transferred to a state college or a campus of the University of California are shown in Tables 4 and 5. The proportion of students who earned bachelor's degrees during those years showed only moderate variation, except in 1961-62. The low percentage in that year may be explained by the fact that these students would have had an opportunity to complete only four semesters at the state college or university by the time of the study; transfer students often require additional time to earn their degrees.

4. Grade Point Averages. Data regarding grade point averages were available for 343 or 79 percent of the transfer students. The distribution of grade point averages is shown in Table 6. No trend is apparent. It is interesting to note that the mean grade point average of the groups who earned bachelor's degrees was 2.54 as compared with that of 2.20 for those who did not. Students' grade point averages ranged from a low of .79 (D minus) to a high of 3.84 on a four-point scale. One engineering major was graduated magna cum laude from San Fernando Valley State College while a social science major graduated summa cum laude from San Francisco State College. Thirty-two or 9.3 percent of the 343 students earned grade point averages of 3.0 and above while 52 or 15.1 percent earned grade point averages below 2.0. Obviously, academic performance was only one of a number of factors responsible for students not graduating. One might suggest a number of others: financial difficulties, health, and marriage which may have interrupted students' academic progress.

5. Semesters Required to Graduate. An average of 6.7 semesters was required for graduation after transfer to a four-year institution. (Summer sessions were counted as semesters.) More than half (54.1 percent) of the students required seven or more semesters beyond junior college to earn their bachelor's degrees. For almost one-fourth (23.5 percent) the quest took more than ten semesters.

Summary and Discussion

1. Success in Earning the A.A. Degree. The data revealed that a consistently high proportion of both transfer and terminal "average" students did not complete associate in arts degree requirements during the period of the study, the "failure rate" increasing somewhat in the later classes. Several explanations may be suggested. During the period of the study, junior college enrollments experienced unprecedented growth as a result of both a population increase and a growing emphasis on the need for post-high school education. The sheer pressure of numbers and the intensified

competition for grades during this period may partially explain the declining rate of success in earning associate in arts degrees by average ability students.

From 1953 to 1964 many California junior colleges formed independent junior college districts. Separate administrations, boards, faculties, and facilities became the rule rather than the exception. The word "junior" was dropped from the names of many colleges as they moved further from their former high school orientation. An increasing number of new instructors who had not experienced a close working relationship with high school faculties were added to junior college teaching staffs. These changes occurred at the College of the Sequoias either during or shortly after the period under study. It is possible that a desire by the faculty to project a collegiate image prompted a more stringent grading policy.

2. The Junior College and the Screening Function. Among transfer students, a relatively high proportion (approximately two-thirds) neither completed associate in arts degree requirements nor transferred to four-year institutions. Thus, it may be concluded that the College of the Sequoias was fulfilling one of the missions perceived for the junior college by California's Master Plan for Higher Education, that of providing a proving ground for potential four-year college students.

3. Performance of Terminal Students. Assuming that all students in the study were of comparable aptitude and intelligence, the higher proportion of non-graduates found among the terminal students than among the transfer students suggests that terminal students place less emphasis on the receipt of the degree than on the attainment of skills for early employment.

4. Performance at Four-Year Institutions. No appreciable change appeared in the mean grade point average of students who had transferred to the state colleges and university branches. Apparently those who transferred comprised a group who had withstood a rather rigorous selection process. The data show that for College of the Sequoias' students the grading standards and student retention rate of the state's four-year institutions remained relatively constant, while at the College of the Sequoias the retention rate fell.

5. The Importance of Perseverance. An average of 6.7 semesters of attendance, in addition to four semesters in the junior college, would appear to exceed the time normally required to earn a bachelor's degree. This fact would seem to reinforce the opinions of counselors and instructors that they should not categorize students as "four-year college" material solely on the basis of a limited amount of objective test information. Even the student whose prospects for academic success at a four-year institution appear to be minimal should be allowed to make the attempt. The importance of perseverance in earning a bachelor's degree should not be underestimated.

TABLE 1

The Numbers and Percentages of Entering Freshmen Students
Classified as Average at the College of the Sequoias
1953-54 to 1963-64

	ACADEMIC YEAR										
	1953-54	1954-55	1955-56	1956-57	1957-58	1958-59	1959-60	1960-61	1961-62	1962-63	1963-64	TOTAL
Number	88	137	143	125	153	181	123	254	192	192	182	1770
Percent of All Freshmen	18.26	23.14	17.23	13.27	16.61	17.99	15.09	25.30	16.83	15.64	13.48	17.17

TABLE 2

Number and Percentage of Average Students
Who Completed Associate in Arts Degree Requirements
Or Transferred to Four-Year Institutions, By Years

Year	Total		Transfer		Terminal	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
1953-54	32	36.4	27	38.0	5	29.4
1954-55	56	40.8	48	45.3	8	25.8
1955-56	49	34.3	36	36.0	13	30.2
1956-57	43	34.4	34	37.4	9	26.5
1957-58	55	35.9	50	42.7	5	13.9
1958-59	62	34.3	52	35.9	10	27.8
1959-60	39	31.7	35	38.5	4	12.5
1960-61	81	31.9	65	34.9	16	23.5
1961-62	56	29.2	50	33.3	6	14.3
1962-63	53	27.6	44	32.6	9	15.8
1963-64	40	23.1	30	23.3	10	18.9
TOTALS	566	32.1	471	35.7	95	21.6

TABLE 3

Number and Percentages of Average Students Who Completed Requirements For the Associate in Arts Degree or for Transfer to a Four-Year Institution in Either of Two Five-Year Periods

	Total		Transfer		Terminal	
Period	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
1953-4 to 1957-8	235	36.4	195	40.2	40	24.8
1958-9 to 1962-3	291	30.9	246	34.8	45	19.1

TABLE 4

Performances of Average Students Transferring to a State College
1953-54 to 1961-62[a]

	1953-54		1954-55		1955-56		1956-57		1957-58		1958-59		1959-60		1960-61		1961-62		TOTAL	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Graduated (B.A. or B.S.)	29	58.0	21	58.3	22	61.1	23	54.8	26	60.5	29	50.0	29	55.8	28	56.0	16	33.3	223	53.7
Did Not Graduate	21	42.0	14	38.9	14	38.9	18	42.8	17	39.5	27	46.6	21	40.4	20	40.0	29	60.4	181	43.6
Attending	0	0	1	2.8	0	0	1	2.4	0	0	2	3.4	2	3.8	2	4.0	3	6.3	11	2.7
Total	50	100.0	36	100.0	36	100.0	42	100.0	43	100.0	58	100.0	52	100.0	50	100.0	48	100.0	415	100.0

TABLE 5

Performances of Average Students Transferring to the University of California
1953-54 to 1961-62[a]

	1953-54		1954-55		1955-56		1956-57		1957-58		1958-59		1959-60		1960-61		1961-62		TOTAL	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Graduated (B.A. or B.S.)	0	-	2	100.0	0	0	1	50.0	2	66.7	2	40.0	1	33.3	2	66.7	1	100.0	11	55.0
Did Not Graduate	0	-	0	0	1	100.0	1	50.0	1	33.3	3	60.0	2	66.7	1	33.3	0	0	9	45.0
Total	0	-	2	100.0	1	100.0	2	100.0	3	100.0	5	100.0	3	100.0	3	100.0	1	100.0	20	100.0

[a] Years indicate the first year of attendance at the College of the Sequoias

TABLE 6

Cumulative Mean Grade Point Averages of Students Who Transferred to Four-Year Institutions, 1953-54 to 1961-62[a]

	1953-54	1954-55	1955-56	1956-57	1957-58	1958-59	1959-60	1960-61	1961-62	All Years
Students Who Earned Bachelor's Degrees	2.49	2.52	2.55	2.56	2.54	2.59	2.57	2.39	2.73	2.54
Students Who Did Not Earn Bachelor's Degrees	2.39	1.94	1.81	2.12	2.14	2.41	2.10	2.23	2.31	2.20
All Students	2.45	2.30	2.25	2.39	2.38	2.51	2.38	2.35	2.45	2.39

[a] Years shown are those of first attendance at the College of the Sequoias